

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

1. Context

South View School is dedicated to encouraging all pupils and staff to be self-aware, confident and resilient, experiencing a positive approach to wellbeing and mental health. South View School offers a well planned, nurturing and personalised approach to mental health and wellbeing, ensuring the staff and pupils feel valued, cared for and know that they can access support should they need it.

2. Vision

We aim for all our students to feel safe, supported, challenged and inspired to learn. We want our pupils to strive for greatness and understand the behaviours they need to achieve this. Our motto, "Be Kind, Be Great, Be You," acknowledges that all students have the potential to be "great", safe in the knowledge that they have the freedom to express themselves whilst holding on to their unique sense of identity.

- To promote positive wellbeing and mental health for every member of our school community.
- To develop a culture of kindness and positivity where which promotes a sense of belonging, where each individual is valued.
- To teach and develop emotional regulatory skills. By using this approach, our students understand their journey to success will not be linear and although they will face challenges, they will have the tools and knowhow to overcome these.
- To promote a safe, caring, supportive and inspirational environment in which staff and students can thrive under the umbrella of mutual respect.
- To ensure that care is consistent, fair and reliable across the school for both students and staff.
- To use and develop whole school approaches coupled with specialised targeted interventions to support vulnerable students.

3. Mission

We recognise that it is the collective responsibility of the family, school and community, to ensure the wellbeing of the pupil. South View School will strive to ensure that all pupils and staff are supported in nurturing mental health and wellbeing. The Senior Leadership & Safeguarding teams will regularly discuss the wellbeing of staff and pupils at meetings and take positive action as required. This will be based on current good practice as certified by UK and international standards.

4. Aims

The primary aim is to promote the wellbeing of all pupils and staff, ensuring that individuals are appropriately supported, by acting in the following ways:

- To review and to promote best practice within the school.
- To ensure all staff feel valued and cared for and have the confidence to seek help if required.
- To foster nurturing relationships between staff and their line managers.
- Promote positive wellbeing throughout the school.
- Promote the school's mission, vision and values, and so develop happy, kind and confident pupils.
- Celebrate the individuality of each pupil, staff member and parent recognising that positive mental health and wellbeing are different for each person.
- Adopt a whole school approach to mental health and provide targeted support where necessary to students, staff and where needed parents/families, including coaching and mentoring.
- Raise awareness around mental health for the community of South View School in order to reduce the stigma around mental health and promote wellbeing.
- Empower staff through training to respond appropriately to early warning signs displayed by pupils, parents and colleagues.
- Support staff who may be struggling with their own mental health.

5. Policy Scope

This policy is to guide and support all staff, making them aware of South View School's approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing throughout the school. It should be read and understood in conjunction with other key policy documents including but not limited to;

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Counselling Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Anti Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Whistle Blowing Policy
- Staff handbook

6. Measures for promoting Mental Health and Wellbeing

- **The Moral and Social scheme of work** promotes positive mental health and wellbeing in all year groups.
- **Parent workshops/coffee mornings** are delivered regularly by the Pastoral Team, Inclusion Team and School Counsellor.
- **Whole staff INSET** covers mental health issues and embed the procedures of this policy, alongside the Counselling policy.
- **The School Counsellor** is available to all students, staff and parents. The service is confidential, in the absence of immediate risk of harm to the person.
- **Awareness Days** are held frequently to raise awareness and promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

7. Key Staff Members

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in safeguarding and wellbeing. These are;

Principal: David Flint

Deputy Head Pastoral (Primary): Naomi Williams

Assistant Head Pastoral (Secondary): Stuart MacPherson

Head of Student Support: Laura Stokes

School Counsellor: Sarah Benaud

Designated Safeguarding Leads: Laura Stokes, Stuart Macpherson, Naomi Williams

If a staff member or member of the community is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil, they should discuss their concerns with one of the above members of staff.

During school holidays, Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are encouraged to put an automated reply to emails signposting senders to still email in the event they have a concern.

8. Teaching

At South View School we pride ourselves on our curriculum provision that is adapted to the needs of the pupils throughout the year. All pupils have the opportunity to learn about mental health and wellbeing through different classes such as Moral Education and PSE, alongside various awareness days throughout the year such as World Mental Health Day. The importance of resilience is emphasised throughout all subjects and in assemblies. The school focuses on resilience as the most important strategy for pupils maintaining and improving their wellbeing and assist them in developing this quality.

9. Support for staff and pupils

Both pupils and staff have access to various support networks and dedicated professionals. These staff members are highlighted on the Wellbeing Committee posters that are displayed throughout the school. Our School Counsellor is the first port of call for specialist support. There are a range of services outside school that offer support to pupils and staff. Information about other providers can be provided on request by the school, but South View School has no affiliation with any of these providers. The Wellbeing Committee can provide guidance and recommendations, but it is then the responsibility of the parents of the pupil to contact the providers, arrange appointments and pay for the appointments.

10. Identifying needs and warning signs

All staff will be trained on how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems throughout the year. South View School provides a range of learning opportunities through the CPD programme, including face to face workshops and online courses, specifically the Educare training suite. The aim is to ensure that all staff can offer basic support when needed and refer cases to the responsible person. It is important that if any stakeholder who has a concern about a child's mental wellbeing will first discuss their concerns with a member of the team named in this policy. All warning signs will be taken seriously and staff who notice any of the following signs should immediately communicate their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff are trained to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including;

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.

- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood.
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of the year, eg. Jumpers in the middle of the summer. Other signs that may be a concern;
- Erratic attendance and high absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

11. Disclosures

If a student makes a disclosure about them or someone else, staff are to remain calm, be supportive and non-judgemental. They will listen to what the person is saying in its entirety and explain that they are concerned for them and that there are people in the school that can support them and that the staff member can accompany them if they so wish. Staff should never agree to keeping a disclosure confidential from the DSL or responsible staff.

All safeguarding and child protection disclosures are to be kept confidential and documented on My Concern. This will alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead as per the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Records may only be shared with designated members of staff as deemed necessary by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. In some situations, staff may be required to attend meetings with the team of child protection officers to best support the staff member and the pupil. If staff require support following a disclosure this will be provided by the Counsellor/DSL. If a parent or staff make a disclosure it is important to follow the steps outlined also and consult the Principal/DSL. If the disclosure is concerning the Principal/DSL, then the disclosure should be reported to the DDSL or another member of the Safeguarding Team.

12. Confidentiality

Every concern regarding mental health and wellbeing is to be kept confidential and only shared with the designated staff as named in this policy. Mental health is a very sensitive topic and consideration needs to be shown to all involved. The pupil, parent and/or staff member concerned should be informed of the steps along the way.

13. Whole school approach

It is important that the school also works with parents, carers, and other agencies and partners when necessary. SVS aims to support parents as much as possible by;

- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing as they exist at South View School.
- Ensuring parents are aware of who to talk to and how to contact them.
- Giving parents support and guidance on how to best support their child.
- Ensuring that this policy is available to parents.
- Informing the community that staff have mental health training and that mental health is something that South View School takes seriously.

Working with other agencies

As part of our whole school approach, other agencies may work with students both in school and outside of school. These may include;

- The school nurses.
- The school doctor.
- Other counselling/ therapy services.
- Psychologist/Psychiatrists.
- Behavioural therapists.
- Occupational therapists.
- Speech and language therapists.

14. Training

All staff will receive training to support them and the students throughout the year. This will form part of the Safeguarding and Child Protection training and training records will be held. If it becomes apparent that staff need additional training this will be noted and every effort will be made to provide it.

15. Staff Wellbeing

Staff Wellbeing at South View School is a priority. Wellbeing is supported through a number of initiatives, including but not limited to:

- An appraisal system.
- Consideration and avoidance of unnecessary meetings.
- Child care services provided for meetings and training sessions.
- Open door policy with SLT.
- Staff shout out padlet.
- Wellbeing Team availability.
- Staff events/socials.
- Staff appreciation – coffees, treats, etc.
- Provision of a school counsellor.
- Provision of support for the school counsellor and pastoral team.